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19 March 1982

MEMORANDUM FOR: Chief, Classification Review Division

25X1 FROM:

[Redacted]
Chief, Operations Branch

SUBJECT: The Question of the Accessioning
of 1950-54 State Records to NARS (U)

1. During our visit to NARS on 18 March 1982 to brief the 25-member team which will review the 1950-54 State Department records, we learned that some of those records had been accessioned to NARS. This was contrary to what we had known before and seemed to contradict the statement in the NARS/State contract covering the review of these records that they would not be accessioned to NARS until the review was completed. (U)

2. To clarify the matter, I contacted Ms. Joann Williamson on 19 March and she gave the following explanation: In 1969 State sent a group of records to the NARS records center for holding. That particular group of records was given the Records Center Accession Number 69A-543. Included in that group of records were some State Post records for the period 1936-1957. Post records fall within NARS Records Group 84 when they are accessioned into the Archives of NARS, as opposed to being held in storage in a NARS records center. In 1978 NARS signed an accessioning agreement with State "accepting everything" in records center accession number 69A-543. This, as noted above, included some Post records for the 1950-54 period and Ms. Williamson estimated this amounts to about five percent of the total RG-84 material for the period 1950-54. It also means that NARS is responsible for responding to FOIA and mandatory review requests that involve these particular Post records. She also stated that about one-dozen researchers had sought material from this group of records since 1978 and some was shown to the researchers after review by NARS declassification personnel. The State guidelines NARS personnel used in that review, however, were considered too general to be meaningful in helping NARS reviewers make classification decisions. Now, NARS has withdrawn this material from access by researchers and will review it again under the new and more detailed guidelines which State drew up at the request of NARS. Any documents or material that was given to researchers and that contains information of interest to CIA will be shown to us so that we can make a damage assessment. (U)

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3. Since an estimated five percent of RG-84 records have already been accessioned to NARS, it will cause a problem in separating these two categories of records and answering FOIA and mandatory requests. All of RG-59 (Department records) and about 95 percent of RG-84 records will be susceptible to FOIA and mandatory requests. To our responsibilities it adds the necessary extra care in reviewing those documents already released to see what, if any damage, was done. (U)



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